

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings include amendments to Figures 26C, 28A, 28B, and 29. The Replacement Sheets replace the corresponding original sheets and include only those Figures previously presented in the original drawings.

As illustrated on the Annotated Sheet, Figure 29 has been amended to illustrate the inner portion of second component 22' comprising a greater longitudinal dimension to allow for extension of propulsion member 172', and enlargement of the channel in element 162 to engage locking members 62' concurrent with the extension of the propulsion member 172', such that the first component 18' and the second component 22' are detachable.

In addition, Figure 26C has been amended to correct a duplicate reference character 164, now 162', in accordance with the amended specification.

Finally, Figures 28A and 28B have been amended to include reference characters 162 and 163 as identified in the specification, which were inadvertently not included in the original drawings.

Attachment: 4 Replacement Sheets
 4 Annotated Sheets Showing Changes

REMARKS

This Amendment is submitted in full response to the Office Action dated March 21, 2006, on the merits of the above-identified case and, accordingly, reconsideration of this application is hereby respectfully requested.

As an initial matter, Applicant is appreciative of the Examiner's conscientious review of this application and allowance of claims 43-45. In the outstanding Office Action, claims 1-8, 10, and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,573,725 to Griffiths, and, claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Griffiths. In addition, the disclosure and the drawings, specifically, Figure 29, have been objected to on the basis that as illustrated the interior dimensions of the second component 22' appear to prevent propulsion member 172' from extending to the broken line position so as to cause the first component 18' to detach from the second component 22'.

In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that each claim which remains pending in the present application is in condition for immediate allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

As an initial matter, Applicant has cancelled allowed independent claim 43, which was newly presented in the previous Amendment dated January 4, 2006, and has presented the exact same claim as new independent claim 46. This action has been taken

because an originally filed claim 43 was withdrawn in response to the election and restriction requirement, and new independent claim 43 was incorrectly numbered when it was added. Allowed dependent claims 44 and 45 have been amended to depend from new independent claim 46, and Applicant submits that claims 44-46 are in condition for immediate allowance. Further, in accordance with the Examiner's instructions, Applicant has cancelled previously withdrawn claims, namely, 11-17 and 19-43, however, Applicant reserves the right to represent one or more of these withdrawn claims in a continuing patent application.

Also, Applicant has amended Figure 29 to illustrate the inner portion of the second component 22' comprising a greater longitudinal dimension to allow room for extension of propulsion member 172' and enlargement of the channel in element 162 to engage locking members 62' concurrent with the extension of the propulsion member 172', such that the first component 18' and the second component 22' are detachable. As such, Applicant believes the objection to Figure 29 is fully addressed and, further, that the objection to the specification is now moot in view of amended Figure 29.

Next, with respect to the rejection of claims 1-10 and 18 based upon U.S. Patent No. 4,573,725 to Griffiths, Applicant respectfully maintains that that the rejection of claims as anticipated by or unpatentable over Griffiths is improper because at least one claimed element is not present or is not identically

disclosed in as complete detail by Griffiths, for the reasons stated in response to the previous Office Action, however, Applicant has amended certain claims and cancelled others in the interest of placing the present application in condition for immediate allowance.

Specifically, Applicant has amended claim 1 to incorporate the subject matter of dependent claims 7, 8, and 10, essentially, an actuation member having a distal portion comprising a propulsion member. In addition, independent claim 1 has been amended to distinguish the "propulsion member" from Griffiths in accordance with previously allowed independent claim 43, i.e., "said propulsion member structured to exert a separation force sufficient to cause said first component and said second component to detach from one another." Independent claim 1 has also been amended to address informalities in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions. As such, Applicant submits that independent claim 1, as amended herein, is also in condition for immediate allowance. In view of the foregoing, original dependent claims 4-6, which depend either directly or indirectly from independent claim 1, as amended herein, are now also believed to be in condition for immediate allowance.

Finally, claims 7-10 and 18 have been cancelled, amendments have been made to the specification to correct minor inconsistencies, informalities, and typographical errors, and minor amendments have been made to Figures 26C, 28A, and 28B which are

evident on the accompanying annotated sheets. Applicant submits that care was taken not to add any new subject matter in the above noted changes to the specification and drawings.

Accordingly, based on the foregoing Amendments and Remarks, it is urged that this case is now clearly in condition for allowance and, accordingly, such action is respectfully solicited.

In the event that any fee may be required by the filing of this paper an Authorization to Charge Fees to **Deposit Account No. 13-1227** is being filed concurrently with this Amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: 6-21-06



Application No. 10/787,338
Office Action dated Mar. 21, 2006
Reply to Office Action dated Jun. 21, 2006
Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

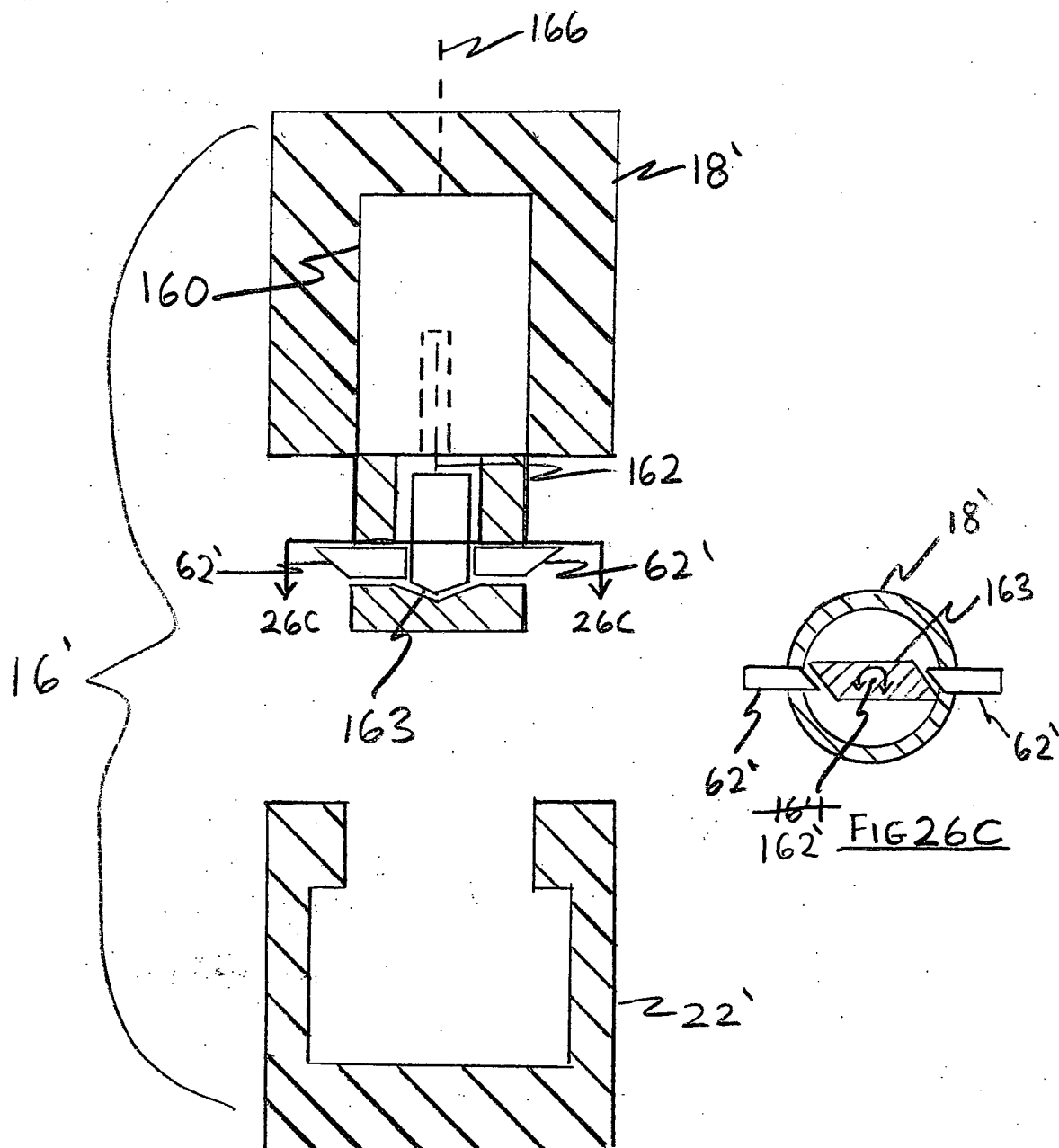


FIG 26B

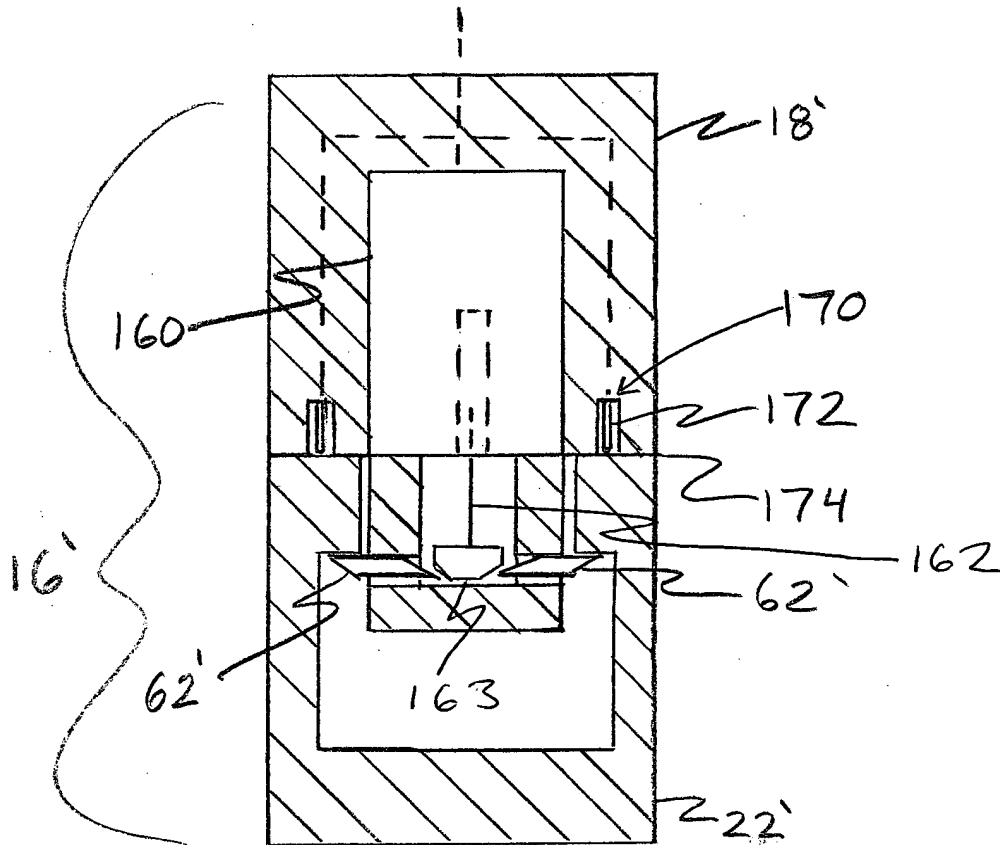


FIG 28A

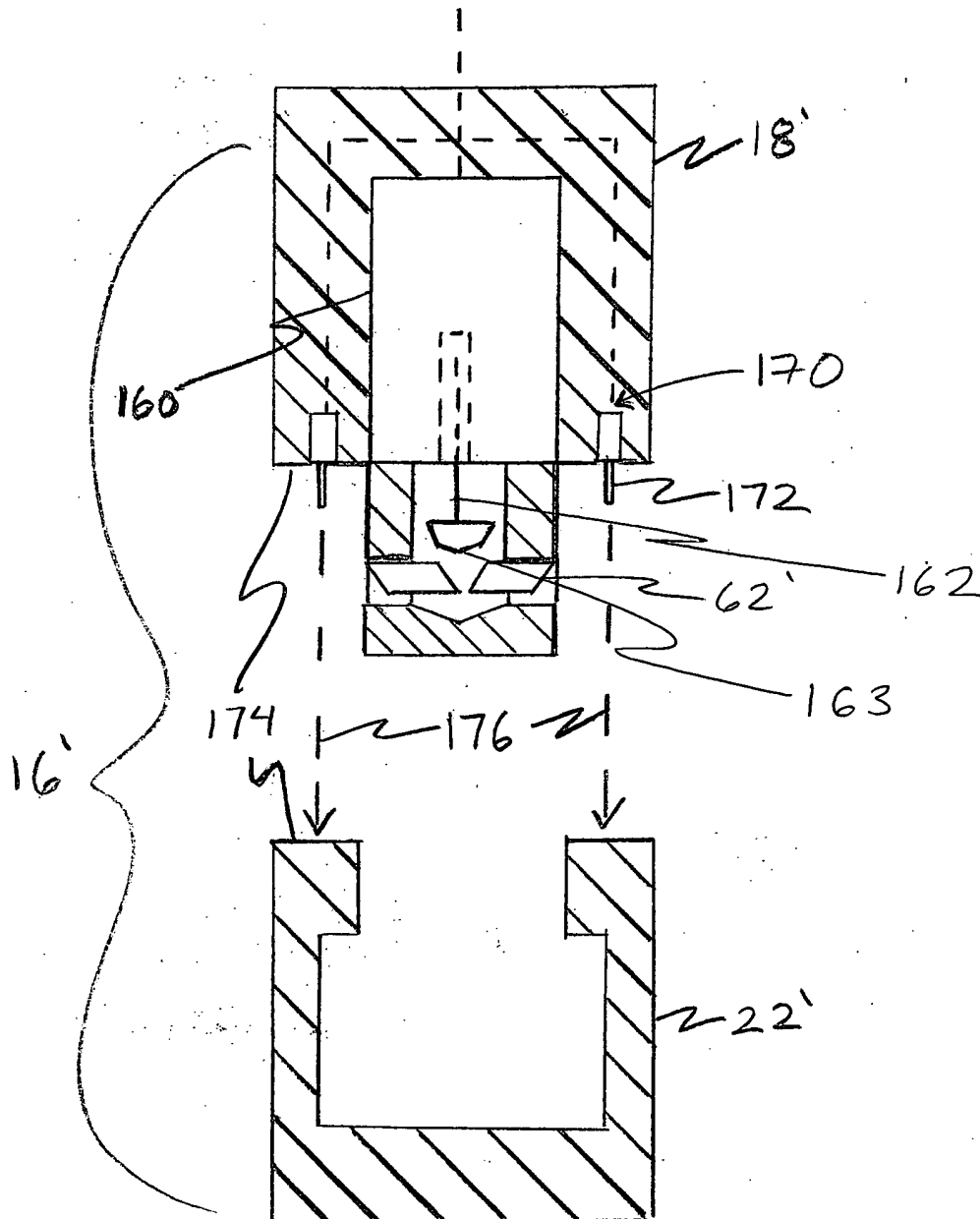


FIG 28B

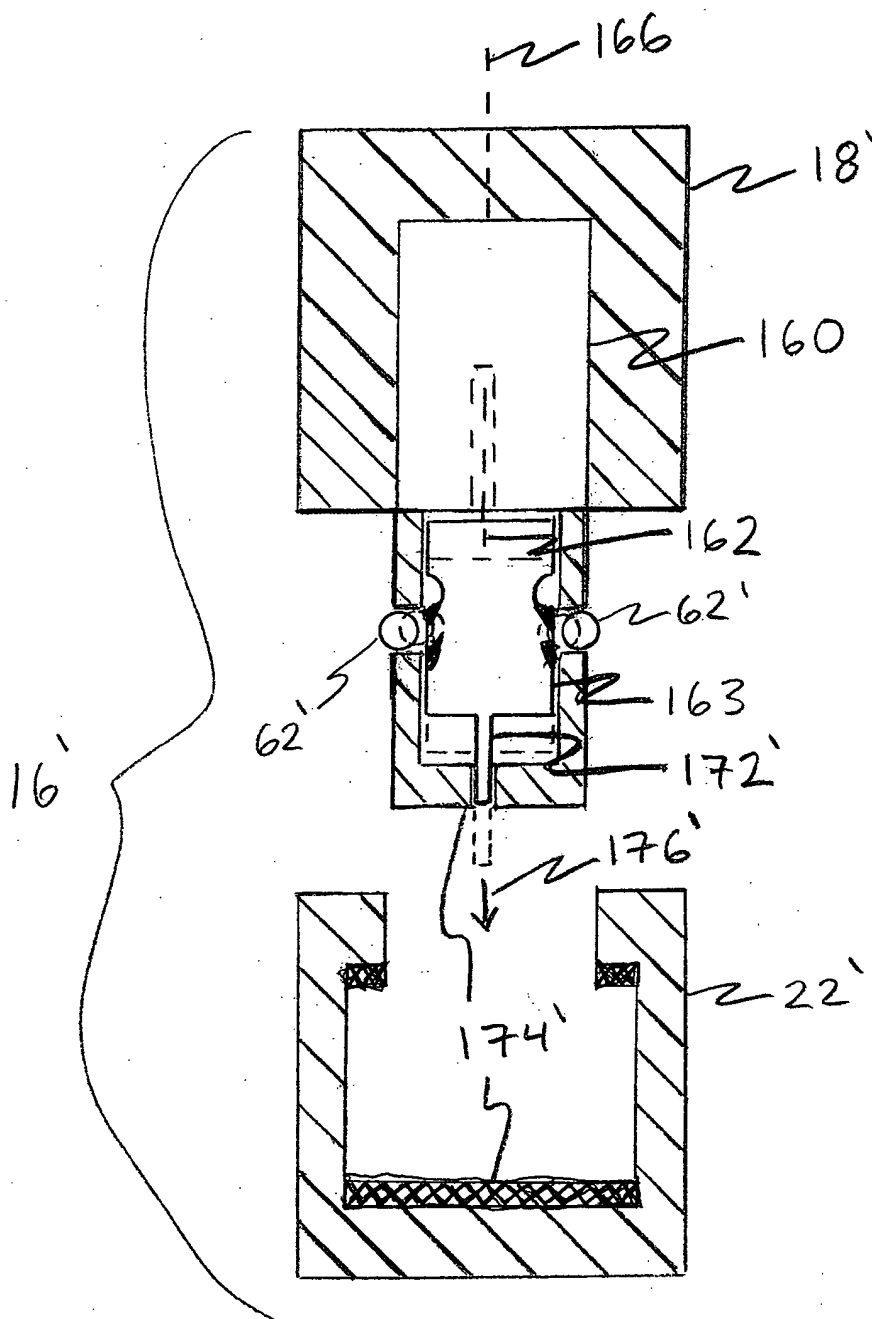


FIG 29